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Letter dated 1 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 20 April 2000 (see annex I) and the appeal of N. Bakhmanov, head of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorny Karabakh, to the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the States members of the Minsk Group, dated 20 April 2000 (see annex II), in connection with the forthcoming "elections to Parliament" of the so-called "Republic of Nagorny Karabakh" scheduled for 18 June 2000.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Eldar G. **Kouliev**
Permanent Representative

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Annex I to the letter dated 1 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic dated 20 April 2000

According to a report circulated in the mass information media of Armenia on April 2000, elections to the "Parliament" of the so-called "Nagorny Karabakh Republic" are scheduled to be held on 18 June 2000 in the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic occupied by Armenian separatists.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic states that the holding of the so-called "elections" in Nagorny Karabakh, which appear to be nothing more than a further political ploy, is regarded as aggression against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Azerbaijani Republic, a flouting of its Constitution and laws, and, in general, a flagrant violation of the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The planned "Parliamentary elections" in Nagorny Karabakh should be regarded as a blatant challenge to international legal standards and an attempt to present the international community with a fait accompli. This latest ploy of elections in the "Nagorny Karabakh Republic", which is not recognized by any State in the world, not even Armenia to which it is in fact subject, is a further attempt to lend a semblance of legitimacy to the fact of the aggression by the armed separatists, the forces which seized power in that inalienable and integral part of Azerbaijan. The method of governing of the "leaders", which reflects relations between them based on force and terror, once again demonstrates how far they are from the tradition of parliamentarism and democracy.

The actions of the infamous regime in Nagorny Karabakh, which are contrary to international law, are clear evidence of the attempts of the Armenian separatists to legitimize their authority in Azerbaijani territories and appear to be yet another step taken with a view to further reinforcing the effects of the military aggression by the Republic of Armenia against Azerbaijan.

It is no accident that the puppet regime is taking the initiative in establishing a supposedly legitimate structure of authority right after carrying out a policy of ethnic cleansing in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, expelling by force of arms more than 50,000 Azerbaijanis from their historic lands and pursuing a large-scale destructive policy and a policy of mass terror.

The fact of the aggression and the ethnic cleansing carried out in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan has been strongly condemned in Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), at summit meetings of OSCE, in decisions of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and in the documents of a number of other international organizations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic considers that the carrying out in Nagorny Karabakh, under cover of so-called "parliamentary" elections, of measures which have the character of political provocation has a

negative impact on efforts directed towards the successful conclusion of the peace talks, a political settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and, in general, the strengthening of stability in the region.

This latest farce of elections, aimed at protecting the interests of the group which is in power, has caused deep concern and indignation even among the Armenian population, which has grown tired of the policy of confrontation in Nagorny Karabakh and is living in intolerable social conditions, under constant ideological and political pressure, and, finally, sees that the way to salvation lies in the attainment of peace and the restoration in the region of the sovereign rights of the Azerbaijani Republic and the normalization of relations between the two neighbouring countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic considers that the holding of fair elections in Nagorny Karabakh and the resumption of the activities of the legal organs of power will be possible only after the restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic, on the basis of the proposals of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of OSCE, the liberation of the occupied territories, the return of the Azerbaijani population to their native homes and the restoration of the ethno-democratic situation in the region.

The holding of elections to the "Parliament of the Nagorny Karabakh Republic", which exists only on paper and does not have any resources or authority even in the former district executive committees, is completely illegal and a grave violation of international legal standards. Azerbaijan will not recognize the results of those elections and we are certain that States and Parliaments throughout the world will respect the principles and the genuine traditions of parliamentarianism and take the same position.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic calls upon all international organizations, the United Nations, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the States members of the Minsk Group of OSCE, and the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of OSCE, to condemn the illegal elections which the Armenian separatists intend to hold in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, and to use all possible means of influence to avert this political farce and to refuse to recognize its results.

Annex II to the letter dated 1 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement by the head of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorny Karabakh, N. Bakhmanov, to the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to the States members of the Minsk Group, dated 20 April 2000

On behalf of the 50,000-member Azerbaijani community of Nagorny Karabakh, and also as head of the delegation of Nagorny Karabakh from the Azerbaijani side to the Minsk Group of OSCE, I consider it essential to state our position on the matter referred to below.

As you know, according to a report circulated by the Armenian agency SNARK on 10 April, elections to the "Parliament" of the so-called "Nagorny Karabakh Republic" are scheduled to be held on 18 June 2000 in the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic occupied by Armenian separatists.

We believe that the dishonourable intentions of the separatist regime, which has seized power by force in Nagorny Karabakh and subsequently expelled 50,000 peaceful Azerbaijanis from their homes, and the political farce to which it has resorted in connection with "parliamentary elections" are clear evidence of the attempts by the representatives of that regime to legitimize their criminal authority and represent nothing more than a further attempt to reinforce the consequences of the aggression unleashed by the Republic of Armenia against the Azerbaijani Republic.

The Azerbaijani community believes that, in a situation where the Azerbaijani population has been completely expelled from the territory of Nagorny Karabakh by force of arms, the holding of so-called elections represents a disregard for the rights of the 50,000-member Azerbaijani population of Nagorny Karabakh and a flagrant violation of human rights and international legal standards.

We fully understand that the holding of illegal elections in Nagorny Karabakh represents an attempt to determine the political status of Nagorny Karabakh before the Minsk Conference and to present the entire community with a fait accompli. The formation in Nagorny Karabakh of the structure of organs of legitimate authority and the electoral rules may be established only at the Conference of the Minsk Group of OSCE with the participation of those States members which have assumed responsibility for the settlement of the question.

The ploy of holding elections to the "government" of the puppet "Nagorny Karabakh Republic", which is not recognized by any State in the world, not even Armenia, a ploy that is of a provocatory nature, appears to be nothing more than an artificial freezing of the forthcoming talks within the context of the Minsk process of OSCE. Such provocative acts are aimed at bringing to naught the constructive work of the Co-Chairmen and all the members of the Minsk Group of OSCE carried out in the name of peace.

The separatist regime, obsessed by its dream of establishing a second Armenian State in the region by holding infamous "parliamentary elections" in the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, is impeding the peace process, trampling on the principles of international law in the eyes of the whole world, and disregarding the universally established laws.

As head of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorny Karabakh, I declare that the legal state structures in the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic may be established only after the conflict has been settled, the rights of the Azerbaijani population of Nagorny Karabakh have been restored and the Azerbaijani people who have been expelled by force have returned to their homes, in conditions of joint participation and cooperation between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorny Karabakh. If that does not happen, the planned "parliamentary elections" in the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic will be regarded as illegal and their results will have no legal force.

In appealing to the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of OSCE, the States members of OSCE, international organizations and all States and Parliaments in the world, we call upon them to condemn strongly and to regard as illegal the so-called "parliamentary elections" in the territories of the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic occupied by force by the Armenian separatists.